

Natural Resources / Outdoor Recreation – 1 Day Itinerary

8:30 AM

Begin your day at **Chimney Rock State Park** reaching great heights atop **Chimney Rock**. If you know anything about Chimney Rock State Park, you know Chimney Rock – the epic, ancient bit of granite that stands majestically over some of the most beautiful terrain you'll find. But what draws folks back is everything else they find. Like trail options perfect for families or a little time alone. Rock climbing for beginners to the most advanced. Special events and activities for all.

Where: 431 Main Street, Chimney Rock, NC 28720

Open: Daily all year (weather permitting, except Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day)
8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Daylight savings time 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Call or check online for winter hours.

Cost: Adults \$14, Youth (6-15) \$6, Children 5 & under FREE

Contact: (800) 277-9611 or (828) 625-9611 or www.chimneyrockpark.com

Noon

Exit the park to rest and put your feet in the water at the **Rocky Broad Riverwalk**. A lovely walkway along the river in Chimney Rock Village allows you to connect with the area's natural beauty. Steps lead down to the Rocky Broad River, where you will find picnic tables, beautiful rocks and some local wildlife such as squirrels and birds. Come and relax. Numerous restaurants overlook the riverwalk – it's a good place to pick up lunch!

Where: Main Street, Chimney Rock, NC 28720

Open: Year Round

Cost: Free

Contact: (828) 625-4456

1:30 PM

Continue down Hwy 64/74, hugging Lake Lure, to the **Lake Lure Town Center Walkway and Park**. Here, the mountain lakeside walkway leads into a gorgeous park with gazebo and picnic tables on the water

Where: Hwy 64/74A/9, Lake Lure – Across from the Lake Lure Inn

Open: Anytime

Cost: Free

Contact: (828) 625-9983 or www.townoflakelure.com

2:30 PM

Once you've rested at the Riverwalk and at the Lake Lure Gazebo, continue to the **Drive Donald Ross Nature Trail Park**. Here, you'll find the Donald Ross Nature Trail consisting of ten trails rated from light to moderate in difficulty. It is a welcome new addition to Rutherford County.

Where is it: From Town Hall or the Visitors Center in Lake Lure, continue on Highway 64/74A to Highway 9 South. The trail head is located on the left directly across from the Ingles Supermarket; Lake Lure, NC 28746

Open: Year Round

Cost: Free

Contact: Town of Lake Lure (828) 625-9983 or www.townoflakelure.com

4:30

PM

If you still have the energy for more, you have two great options. The first is to ride to the heart of Rutherford County to the **Thermal Belt Rail Trail**. This route is enjoyable for the entire family. Walk or bring your mountain bike or hybrid and enjoy the flat Rails-to-Trails route over the old Southern Railway.

Where: This 8 mile trail stretches from Spindale to Gilkey. The section from Tanner's north is more rural.

Open: Daily all year

Cost: Free

Contact: (828) 447-1590 or www.rutherfordoutdoor.org (And go here for lots of bike trails in the area!)

OR

For the true outdoors adventurer, head to the county's greatest secret treasure – the largely untouched eastern Rutherford County Mountains of the **South Mountains Game Land**. The South Mountains Game Land is open to the public for outdoor activities, including hiking, fishing, and hunting. You can contact the Wildlife Commission in Raleigh (919-707-0050) for information on access to the game land. Hiking for the extreme outdoor enthusiasts. There are no marked trails; **caution DO NOT HIKE this area during hunting season**. The game lands is part of the CURE (Cooperative Upland habitat Restoration and Enhancement) program for Bobwhite/Quail Habitats.

Where: At the Rutherford County and Burke County line. There are two locations to access this area:

- 1) Hwy 226 turn onto Jones Town Road (across from Bostic Sunshine Hwy) then turn left onto Melton Road follow road to right at fork
- 2) Hwy 64 towards Morganton turn right onto Roper Hollow Road stay straight and road dead ends on game lands.

Open: Daily all year

Cost: Free

Contact: (919) 707-0050 or 800-849-5998 and ask for a game lands map
